

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3131

INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 6795

LIMDIS

PERSONAL FOR EUR HARTMAN/LOWENSTEIN FROM LAINGEN

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINS, PO, AO

SUBJ: U.S. ROLE IN ANGOLAN AIRLIFT

1. I WANT TO RECORD MY SUPPORT FOR WHAT I KNOW ARE
AMBASSADOR CARLUCCI'S CONCERNS ABOUT FURTHER DELAY IN DECISION
WHETHER TO EXPAND U.S. CONTRIBUTION TO THE ANGOLAN AIRLIFT.

2. THE ULTIMATE OUTCOME IN PORTUGAL'S POLITICAL GAME IS
STILL UNCLEAR BUT THE TREND - WHILE SLOW AND UNEVEN - IS
CLEARLY POSITIVE IN TERMS OF WHAT WE CAN EXPECT THERE.
EVERY CONVERSATION THAT I HAD INDICATED THAT OUR POSTURE
CLEARLY MATTERS TO THOSE IN THE GOP AND THE PARTIES WHO ARE
TRYING TO MAINTAIN THIS TREND. WHAT WE DO ON THE AIRLIFT
(WHICH IS RAPIDLY RUNNING OUT OF TIME) WILL BE PARTICULARLY
IMPORTANT, AS WILL SUBSEQUENT ACTIONS ON REFUGEE RELIEF AND
LONGER TERM AID.

3. ON THE ANGOLAN CONNECTION, CARLUCCI IS CONTINUING TO
TAKE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO PRESS THE GOP TO PRACTICE THE
NEUTRAL POLICY IT PROFESSES. WHAT REPORTING I HAVE SEEN
FROM LUANDA RECENTLY SUGGESTS THEY ARE TRYING TO DO THAT,
WHATEVER THEIR PAST SHORTCOMINGS MAY HAVE BEEN. THE
POINT IS THAT THOSE ELEMENTS IN THE LIBSON POWER
STRUGGLE THAT OUR AIRLIFT AND AID ACTIONS CAN STRENGTHEN,
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ARE THE SAME AS THOSE WHO WILL BE INFLUENTIAL ON ANGOLAN

POLICY IN THE SHORT TIME REMAINING FOR THEM THERE.

4. THERE IS ALSO THE HUMANITARIAN ANGLE WHICH NO ONE TRANSITING THE LISBON AIRPORT CAN MISS, AND THE POLITICAL ORIENTATION OF THE REFUGEES THEMSELVES - WHO LOSE LITTLE TIME AFTER THEIR ARRIVAL IN ADDING TO THE NOW GROWING SENTIMENT OF PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR A GOVT SUCH AS THE PRESENT ONE WHICH FINALLY SEEMS PREPARED TO TAKE SOME STANDS AGAINST THE COMMUNISTS AND THE EXTREME LEFT AND THE SERIOUS PROBLEM OF MILITARY INDISCIPLINE.

5. IN SHORT, IF WE ARE GOING TO HELP FURTHER ON THE AIRLIFT WE SHOULD DO IT NOW SO THAT IT CAN HAVE MAXIMUM EFFECT ON BOTH THE ISSUES INVOLVED.
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